

The AFCARS Report

Preliminary FY 2003 Estimates as of April 2005 (10)

How many children were in foster care on September 30, 2003? 523,000

SOURCE: Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data submitted for the FY 2003, 10/1/02 through 9/30/03.

NOTES: Data from both the regular and revised submissions received by April 2005 are included in the information below. Missing data are not used in the calculation of percentages. Some percentages do not total 100% due to rounding. Some columns may not add up to the total number, due to missing data.

What were the ages of the children in foster care?

Mean Years	10.2	
Median Years	10.9	
Under 1 Year	5%	25,070
1 thru 5 Years	25%	129,470
6 thru 10 Years	21%	108,500
11 thru 15 Years	30%	154,970
16 thru 18 Years	18%	93,810
19 Years or More	2%	9,690

What were the placement settings of children in foster care?

Pre-Adoptive Home	5%	24,650
Foster Family Home (Relative)	23%	121,030
Foster Family Home (Non-Relative)	46%	239,810
Group Home	9%	45,700
Institution	10%	51,370
Supervised Independent Living	1%	5,570
Runaway	2%	10,560
Trial Home Visit	4%	19,700

What were the lengths of stay in foster care?

Mean Months	31	
Median Months	18	
Less than 1 Month	5%	23,950
1 to 5 Months	18%	93,900
6 to 11 Months	16%	84,110
12 to 17 Months	12%	63,640
18 to 23 Months	9%	45,850
24 to 29 Months	7%	35,860
30 to 35 Months	5%	27,030
3 to 4 Years	12%	64,810
5 Years or More	16%	83,920

What were the case goals of the children in foster care?

Reunify with Parent(s) or Principal Caretaker(s)	48%	246,650
Live with Other Relative(s)	5%	24,090
Adoption	20%	103,460
Long Term Foster Care	8%	43,250
Emancipation	6%	31,370
Guardianship	3%	15,470
Case Plan Goal Not Yet Established	10%	48,530

Children in Foster Care on September 30, 2003 (continued)

What was the race/ethnicity of the children in foster care?

AI/AN-Non Hispanic	2%	10,260
Asian-Non Hispanic	1%	3,280
Black -Non Hispanic	35%	184,480
Hawaiian/ PI-Non Hispanic	0%	1,540
Hispanic	17%	91,040
White-Non Hispanic	39%	203,920
Unknown/Unable to Determine	3%	13,360
Two or More-Non Hispanic	3%	14,310

What was the gender of the children in foster care?

Male	53%	274,820
Female	48%	248,150

NOTE: Using U.S. Bureau of the Census standards, children of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Beginning in FY 2000, children could be identified with more than one race designation.

How many children entered foster care during FY 2003? 297,000

What were the ages of the children who entered care during FY 2003?

Mean Years	8.4	
Median Years	8.3	
Under 1 Year	14%	42,910
1 thru 5 Years	26%	77,820
6 thru 10 Years	20%	58,490
11 thru 15 Years	29%	85,310
16 thru 18 Years	11%	32,350
19 Years or More	0%	140

What was the race/ethnicity of the children who entered care during FY 2003?

AI/AN-Non Hispanic	2%	6,750
Asian-Non Hispanic	1%	2,640
Black -Non Hispanic	27%	80,300
Hawaiian/ PI-Non Hispanic	0%	1,110
Hispanic	17%	51,180
White-Non Hispanic	46%	137,340
Unknown/Unable to Determine	3%	7,830
Two or More-Non Hispanic	3%	9,010

NOTE: Using U.S. Bureau of the Census standards, children of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Beginning in FY 2000, children could be identified with more than one race designation.

How many children exited foster care during FY 2003? 281,000

What were the ages of the children who exited care during FY 2003?

Mean Years	9.9	
Median Years	10.0	
Under 1 Year	5%	12,630
1 thru 5 Years	28%	79,790
6 thru 10 Years	21%	59,540
11 thru 15 Years	24%	66,790
16 thru 18 Years	20%	55,790
19 Years or More	2%	6,200

What were the lengths of stay of the children who exited foster care during FY 2003?

Mean Months	21.7	
Median Months	11.9	
Less than 1 Month	18%	51,120
1 to 5 Months	16%	45,810
6 to 11 Months	16%	44,870
12 to 17 Months	12%	33,720
18 to 23 Months	8%	23,290
24 to 29 Months	6%	16,770
30 to 35 Months	5%	12,650
3 to 4 Years	10%	27,770
5 Years or More	9%	24,110

What was the race/ethnicity of the children who exited care during FY 2003?

AI/AN-Non Hispanic	2%	5,720
Asian-Non Hispanic	1%	2,620
Black -Non Hispanic	29%	82,420
Hawaiian/ PI-Non Hispanic	0%	970
Hispanic	16%	45,890
White-Non Hispanic	46%	127,680
Unknown/Unable to Determine	3%	7,260
Two or More-Non Hispanic	3%	8,080

NOTE: Using U.S. Bureau of the Census standards, children of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Beginning in FY 2000, children could be identified with more than one race designation.

What were the outcomes for the children exiting foster care during FY 2003?

Reunification with Parent(s) or Primary Caretaker(s)	55%	151,770
Living with Other Relative(s)	11%	30,570
Adoption	18%	49,340
Emancipation	8%	21,720
Guardianship	4%	10,700
Transfer to Another Agency	2%	6,420
Runaway	2%	4,070
Death of Child	0%	570

NOTE: Deaths are attributable to a variety of causes including medical conditions, accidents and homicide.

How many children were waiting to be adopted on September 30, 2003? 119,000

NOTES: Waiting children are identified as children who have a goal of adoption and/or whose parental rights have been terminated. Children 16 years old and older whose parental rights have been terminated and who have a goal of emancipation have been excluded from the estimate.

What is the gender distribution of the waiting children?

Male	53%	63,120
Female	47%	55,620

How old were the waiting children when they were removed from their parents or caretakers?

Mean Years	5.0	
Median Years	4.3	
Under 1 Year	25%	29,350
1 thru 5 Years	36%	43,360
6 thru 10 Years	29%	33,900
11 thru 15 Years	10%	11,800
16 thru 18 Years	0%	360

How many months have the waiting children been in continuous foster care?

Mean Months	43.9	
Median Months	33.7	
Less than 1 Month	0%	470
1 through 5 Months	3%	3,920
6 through 11 Months	7%	8,390
12 through 17 Months	11%	13,090
18 through 23 Months	11%	13,590
24 through 29 Months	11%	12,990
30 through 35 Months	9%	10,560
36 through 59 Months	23%	26,930
60 or more Months	24%	28,840

What is the racial/ethnic distribution of the waiting children?

AI/AN-Non Hispanic	2%	2,190
Asian-Non Hispanic	0%	510
Black -Non Hispanic	40%	47,630
Hawaiian/ PI-Non Hispanic	0%	340
Hispanic	14%	16,210
White-Non Hispanic	37%	43,820
Unknown/Unable to Determine	4%	4,240
Two or More-Non Hispanic	3%	3,720

NOTE Using U.S. Bureau of the Census standards, children of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Beginning in FY 2000, children could be identified with more than one race designation.

How old were the children on September 30, 2003?

Mean Years	8.6	
Median Years	8.7	
Less than 1 Year	3%	3,850
1 thru 5 Years	32%	38,200
6 thru 10 Years	28%	33,430
11 thru 15 Years	30%	35,770
16 thru 18 Years	6%	7,510

Where were the waiting children living on September 30, 2003?

Pre-Adoptive Home	17%	19,670
Foster Family Home (Relative)	16%	19,240
Foster Family Home (Non-Relative)	55%	64,740
Group Home	4%	5,050
Institution	7%	8,070
Supervised Independent Living	0%	90
Runaway	1%	620
Trial Home Visit	0%	430

How many children in foster care had their parental rights terminated for all living parents?
68,000

As of September 30, 2003, how many months had elapsed since the parental rights of these foster children were terminated?

Mean Months	26
Median Months	16

How many children were adopted from the public foster care system in FY 2003? 50,000

SOURCE: Adoptions can be reported to the AFCARS adoption database at any time after the adoption has been finalized. TAR 10 includes adoptions finalized in FY 2003 reported in regular and revised submissions by March 3, 2005.

NOTES: The number of adoptions reported here do not equal the number of adoption discharges reported under foster care exits because the adoptions reported here include adoptions of some children who were not in foster care but received other support from the public agency. In addition, states have historically underreported adoption discharges. In contrast, states tend to more accurately report the adoptions to the AFCARS adoption database because those are the adoptions used to calculate adoption incentive awards. Some percentages do not total 100% due to rounding. Some columns may not add up to the total number due to missing data.

What is the gender distribution of the children adopted from the public foster care system?

Male	50%	25,170
Female	50%	24,960

How old were the children when they were adopted from the public foster care system?

Mean Years	7.0
Median Years	6.1

Less than 1 Year	2%	920
1 thru 5 Years	47%	23,630
6 thru 10 Years	30%	15,270
11 thru 15 Years	18%	8,900
16 thru 18 Years	3%	1,360
19 Years or More	0%	50

What percentage of the children adopted receive an adoption subsidy?

Yes	88%	43,620
No	13%	6,220

What is the racial/ethnic distribution of the children adopted from the public foster care system?

AI/AN-Non Hispanic	1%	700
Asian-Non Hispanic	1%	320
Black-Non Hispanic	33%	16,570
Hawaiian/PI-Non Hispanic	0%	130
Hispanic	16%	7,900
White-Non Hispanic	42%	20,940
Unknown/Unable to Determine	3%	1,370
Two or More-Non Hispanic	4%	2,190

NOTE: Using U.S. Bureau of the Census standards, children of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Beginning in FY 2000, children could be identified with more than one race designation.

How many months did it take after termination of parental rights for the children to be adopted?

Mean Months	16.3
Median Months	12.0

Less than 1 Month	3%	1,610
1 thru 5 Months	19%	8,960
6 thru 11 Months	28%	13,770
12 thru 17 Months	19%	9,170
18 thru 23 Months	12%	5,550
24 thru 29 Months	7%	3,210
30 thru 35 Months	4%	2,010
3 thru 4 Years	6%	3,090
5 Years or More	2%	1,080

Children Adopted in FY 2003 (Continued)

What is the family structure of the child's adoptive family?

Married Couple	67%	30,640
Unmarried Couple	2%	720
Single Female	28%	12,900
Single Male	3%	1,180

NOTE: The total number of adoptions in this table does not approach 50,000 because data were missing for approximately 4,700 (9%) adoptions.

What was the relationship of the adoptive parents to the child prior to the adoption?

Non-Relative	15%	6,320
Foster Parent	62%	25,500
Step-Parent	0%	60
Other Relative	23%	9,540

NOTE: The total number of adoptions in this table does not approach 50,000 because data were missing for approximately 8,720 (17%) adoptions.

NOTES: As of April 2005, the actual counts were: 523,085 children were in foster care on September 30, 2003; 297,308 children entered foster care during FY 2003; 281,472 children exited foster care during FY 2003; and 118,761 children were waiting to be adopted on September 30, 2003. As of March 3, 2005, 50,144 children had been reported to have been adopted in FY 2003. There is no actual count of children for whom parental rights have been terminated because the counts for five states had to be estimated.